

## The Deep Ecologists

### ENVIRONMENTAL ORIENTALISM AND THE CRITIQUE OF THE WEST

In the summer of 1971 the three Norwegian ecophilosophers Sigmund Kvaløy, Arne Næss and Nils Faarlund traveled to the periphery, to the faraway mountains of Nepal. It was a transformative experience for them. In the lives of the Sherpa, they saw an alternative environmentally friendly way of living. Upon their return to Norway they wrote about Sherpa life as an Oriental harmony juxtaposed with the harsh Occidental values of their own Western culture. This demarcation between Oriental ecological wisdom and the Occidental stupidity of the West eventually came to frame the deep ecological debate at home and abroad. Sherpa life was to be a model for all Norwegians, and Sherpa-informed Norwegians were to be a subsequent model for the world.

The road trip from Oslo to Varanasi back in 1969, coupled with subsequent mountain climbing in Nepal, left the ecophilosophers with fond memories. For the summer vacation of 1971 Næss and Kvaløy decided to return to Nepal, this time with their fellow climber Faarlund. The journey was to be a two-month-long “pilgrimage” to the remote mountain village of Beding in the Rolwaling valley of Nepal, and a vacation from the “garish, narcotic nightmare” of the European “consumer society.”<sup>1</sup> They were following a larger trend of people searching

<sup>1</sup> Sigmund Kvaløy, “Likevektssamfunnet: Sherpasamfunnet i Rolwaling,” *Aftenposten A-Magasin*, 7–9, 1972, reprinted in Sigmund Kvaløy, *Økokrise, natur og menneske* (Oslo: Samarbeidsgruppa for natur og miljøvern, 1973), 65–88, quotes pp. 65, 86.

Oriental wisdom and alternatives. In the early 1970s thousands of Western hippies went to Katmandu where they had their own “Freak Street” by Durbar Square in which they nurtured unconventional lifestyles and imagined Nepalese ways of living.<sup>2</sup>

The ecophilosophers’ financial backing was less exotic, as the journey was paid for by Næss’s half-brother, Erling (1901–93), who had become enormously wealthy through industrial whaling in the 1930s and shipping of oil in the 1960s. He took the ecophilosophers along to prove his cultural sincerity for Nepal to Prince Gyanendra, whose personal financial interest he secured by establishing the state-sponsored Royal Nepal Shipping Corporation (in a country without a seacoast). Out of courtesy, they gave the ecophilosophers the necessary travel permissions to visit the closed-for-tourists village of Beding. Naturally, the ecophilosophers kept very quiet about this high-level financial agenda behind their journey. Erling, on the other hand, was open about his business with the corrupt Nepalese, and he amused himself by hiring a helicopter so that he could see with his own eyes what the village of Beding was like, visit his half-brother, and hand out blankets and clothes to the poor.<sup>3</sup> At the time, it should be noted, the environmental impact on climate from all this airborne traveling was hardly known.

The philosophers were not there to seek shipping opportunities, but to climb the mountains of an environment in which they believed people truly lived in harmony with nature. It took, in all, twenty-six Sherpa transporters walking for eight days to make this happen, though they tried to keep their climbing equipment to a minimum. When they arrived they were amazed to find people entirely untouched by Western influences. For two months they lived in a true “steady-state community,” Kvaløy observed, with “balance and peace between the people and the nature they depended on.”<sup>4</sup> To him the lifestyle of Beding was an antidote to the consumer and ecologically destructive societies of the West. The difference between work and leisure, the unfortunate and the elite, and means and ends were here blurred, as people of Beding only strove for the common good of the village and the environment. It was a “self-supporting society” that “we should envy – especially since we soon will arrive at

<sup>2</sup> Torbjørn Ydegaard, *Sherpa – Folket under Everest* (Holte: Skarv, 1988), p. 20.

<sup>3</sup> Erling Dekke Næss, *Autobiography of a Shipping Man* (Colchester, UK: Seatrade Publications, 1977), pp. 252–4. Kvaløy, *Økokrise, natur og menneske*, p. 67.

<sup>4</sup> Kvaløy, *Økokrise, natur og menneske*, pp. 65, 75.

the bitter end of the eco-crisis,” Kvaløy argued.<sup>5</sup> Faarlund was equally convinced: “The 110 inhabitants of Beding knew how we should behave in order to prevent the danger of an ecocatastrophe,” he claimed.<sup>6</sup> Similarly, Næss later praised the Sherpa community in his Deep Ecology writings as “an extremely nature-friendly non-violent Buddhist culture in an extremely unwelcoming nature.”<sup>7</sup> Indeed, in comparison Næss saw Westerners as “worse pests” than the leeches that attacked his own body while he was hiking.<sup>8</sup>

Upon his return to Oslo, Kvaløy concluded that life in Beding was a viable alternative to the industrial society of the European economic growth. In the fall of 1971 he spun into a hectic state of writing, enlarging, and rewriting a previous manuscript about the importance of ecological complexity for social steady-state communities. He now argued that harmonious living depended on being within a community with dense biodiversity.<sup>9</sup> This idea evolved into a larger manuscript in which he argued that such living entailed putting an end to industrial society and turning to agrarian living. His model was the Sherpa, whose “settlement in rhythm with the landscape” conveyed “a lifestyle providing lasting security” for their community through “interaction with nature.”<sup>10</sup> Such a “Life Necessities Society” was, in comparison with the standardized “Industrial Growth Society,” rich in cultural and ecological complexity and should thus be a model for Norwegian interaction with the environment.<sup>11</sup> The breakdown of ecological complexity caused by the Western industrial world would inevitably lead to an eco-catastrophe, he argued, and it was thus imperative to learn from the good people of Beding: “Sherpa and similar societies should be regarded as a vital source of knowledge to us today.”<sup>12</sup>

<sup>5</sup> Sigmund Kvaløy, “Rolwaling – et livssamfunn i likevekt,” *Mestre fjellet*, 15 (1973), 11–12.

<sup>6</sup> Nils Faarlund, “Hvorfor,” *Mestre fjellet*, 13 (1972), 6–7, quote p. 6; “Bidrag til en ekspedisjonssosiologi,” *Mestre fjellet*, 13 (1972), 11–14.

<sup>7</sup> Arne Næss, *Økologi, samfunn og livsstil*, 5th ed. (Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, 1976), 309; “Mountains,” *The Trumpeter*, 21 (2005), 51–4.

<sup>8</sup> Arne Næss, “Blodigle og menneske,” *Mestre fjellet*, 13 (1972), 18.

<sup>9</sup> Sigmund Kvaløy, *Øko-filosofisk fragment: Kompleksitet og komplikasjon* (Oslo: Samarbeidsgruppa for natur og miljøvern, June 1972), 43 pages.

<sup>10</sup> Sigmund Kvaløy, *Økokrise, natur og menneske* (Oslo: Samarbeidsgruppa for natur og miljøvern, 1973), p. 131.

<sup>11</sup> Kvaløy, *Økokrise, natur og menneske*, p. 135.

<sup>12</sup> Sigmund Kvaløy, “Ecophilosophy and ecopolitics: Thinking and acting in response to the threats of ecocatastrophe,” *The North American Review*, 259 (Summer 1974), 16–28, quote p. 24.

Faarlund agreed, yet he concluded that one could not expect to re-educate Western grown-ups in the Oriental wisdom. Instead he put his efforts and hopes into educating the very young Norwegians in Sherpa lifestyle, as their “eco-life” was “free-air-life” and a viable alternative to the advancing eco-crisis. Only by learning to live inside nature could one build a “bridge from a human centered (techno-culture) to a human integrated way of understanding nature (eco-culture),” he argued.<sup>13</sup>

Næss was equally convinced about the virtue of Sherpa living. His subsequent lectures about ecology and philosophy, held in the fall of 1971 and spring of 1972, served as evidence of ecological balance not being “an invention of theoreticians, since it has been and to a certain extent still is praxis today in certain societies, as in the Sherpa communities in Nepal.”<sup>14</sup> His earlier endorsement of Maoism was now toned down by underlying a revised version of his ecosophy that “Mao has *perhaps* kept a part of the classical Chinese outlook” with respect to humans being fragments in nature.<sup>15</sup> Instead, Næss brought Gandhi’s principles of non-violence and his own reading of the Bhagavad-Gita to the core of his ecosophy, arguing the individual self was a fragment within the large Self (with capital S, being the world as a whole). This sense of being a fragment reflected Næss’s personal experiences of minuteness when climbing mountains like Tirich Mir, his meeting with Sherpa lifestyle in Beding, as well as the ecologists’ research into energy circulation in the Finse region. His ecosophy was, in effect, a philosophy of the Alpine Club with an Oriental touch.

Together Kvaløy, Næss, and Faarlund would recount their experiences in Beding in three articles for the weekend magazine of the largest newspaper in Norway. For most Norwegians this was their first report about life in Nepal, and the articles catalyzed a decade-long longing for Sherpa life, with technical climbers and tourists using their vacations to follow in the footsteps of the ecophilosophers.<sup>16</sup> Yet the lives of the Sherpa did not differ radically from the vanishing class of hardworking fishermen-peasants who once lived as fjord and mountain

<sup>13</sup> Nils Faarlund, “Om økoliv,” *Mestre fjellet*, 15 (1973), 7–9, quotes pp. 7, 8; “Friluftsliv i barne- og ungdomsskolen,” *Vår skole*, 61 (1975), 196–209. Jon Skjeseth, *Mennesket og biosfæren: Biologi for Gymnasets Grunnkurs* (Oslo: Fabritius, 1972).

<sup>14</sup> Arne Næss, *Økologi og filosofi: Et økosofisk arbeidsutkast*, preliminary 3rd ed. (Oslo: Department of Philosophy, 1972), 7.

<sup>15</sup> Næss, *Økologi og filosofi*, 3rd ed., p. 177.

<sup>16</sup> See, for example, Arne Næss Jr., *Drangnag-Ri: Det hellige fjellet* (Oslo: Orion, 1995).

farmers of Norway.<sup>17</sup> What the ecophilosophers' audience saw in their reports from Nepal was thus the superiority of traditional Norwegian mountain and fjord culture, which reemerged in the 1960s in the weekenders' romance with their vacation cottages, many of which were located where there had once been self-sufficient steady-state farming communities. In the following decades Kvaløy would visit Beding no less than twenty-two times, resulting in a long stream of glowing reports about the village's life being in ecological harmony. This he contrasted to the ills of industrial society, represented by the Mardøla hydropower development and the capitalism of the European Community.

#### THE REFERENDUM ON THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY

When the ecophilosophers returned to Norway, they immediately became involved in what was perhaps the most divisive political decision of the decade for the nation. Should Norway join the European Community (EC)? The organization was a product of post-war Europe and their aim was to create peace between former enemies using economic integration through a common economic market and a custom union. The philosophers were decidedly against membership because of EC's destruction of nature by the means of capitalism. Upon their return from Nepal they joined a massive political mobilization for a "NO" vote during the year leading up to the scheduled national referendum on September 25, 1972. It became an exacting year, in which almost every publication and appearance addressed the issue. It also created a unified stand in which the many different shades of leftism, counterculture, environmentalism, agrarianism, and also some conservatives would unite in a common call for the rejection of EC membership.

The critiques generally stressed that a membership would undermine national sovereignty, create a greater distance between the people and their political leaders, and, most importantly, undermine Norwegian ownership to natural resources, weaken agriculture, and open up opportunities for callous exploitation of the scenic Norwegian environment by large multinational European companies. The ecophilosophers were also decisively against a membership, and they spent large amounts of time and energy explaining that being outside the European Community was a

<sup>17</sup> Sigmund Kvaløy, "Norwegian ecophilosophy and ecopolitics and their influence from Buddhism," in *Buddhist Perspectives on the Ecocrisis*, Klas Sandell (ed.) (Kandy, Sri Lanka: Buddhist Publication Society, 1987), pp. 49–72.

viable alternative path. Indeed, the overwhelming majority of environmentally concerned scholars would lean toward voting against the membership. To them Norway was to be a beacon of green hope, an example of environmentally alternative ways of living that could inspire Europeans into a better lifestyle.

The Co-working Groups for the Protection of Nature and the Environment, hereafter the Deep Ecologists, were prime movers of the debate. They made their case in the booklet *Dette bør du vite om EF* (This you should know about EC, 1972) written by Kvaløy, Erling Amble, Botolv Helland, Karl G. Høyer, Magne Lindholm, Dag Norling, and Arne Vinje. Here they made it clear that the European Community's sole focus on economic growth and industrial development would lead to a global ecological collapse, the depopulation of rural Norway, and an unfortunate centralization of politics. "Outside EC Norway will have a greater opportunity to follow an independent and long-term environmental politics by managing our natural resources in harmony with ecological insight," they argued.<sup>18</sup> While a vote in favor of the European Community could only lead to a disastrous future for the environment and Norwegian self-sufficient rural communities. "[T]his industrial-serving mega-society seeks to break apart the established *diversity* of sturdy self-governed and heterogeneously, traditional-colored local communities, – and replace them with a uniform system of government that presupposes uniform social units and a uniform culture: a simplification that increases vulnerability, according to the science of ecology."<sup>19</sup> Selling a remarkable ten thousand copies, the booklet served as the Deep Ecologists' chief unifying text.<sup>20</sup>

The booklet became a sort of manifesto for the Deep Ecologists as they evolved from a small University group to a national organization with branches in various places in Norway that focused on diverse topics, such as petroleum policy, fishery, pollution, ecophilosophy, or local environmental problems. Deep Ecologists were unified into a national organization in 1973, and by 1974 the organization had at least twenty-five active local study groups who arranged a whole range of activities and demonstrations aimed at saving the environment. They would focus on deeper

<sup>18</sup> Samarbeidsgruppa for natur og miljøvern (attributed to Erling Amble, Botolv Helland, Karl G. Høyer, Sigmund Kvaløy, Magne Lindholm, Dag Norling, and Arne Vinje), *Dette bør du vite om EF* (Oslo: Pax, 1972), p. 1.

<sup>19</sup> Samarbeidsgruppa, *Dette bør du vite*, p. 91. Tor Bjørklund, *Mot strømmen: Kampen mot EF 1961–1972* (Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, 1982).

<sup>20</sup> Sigmund Kvaløy, "Demokrati," (*snm*) *nytt*, 7 (Sept. 1976), 7–9.

questions about the nature of the Norwegian society, such as the nature of capitalism, as the underlying cause of environmental problems. The Deep Ecologists were a fairly politically diverse group of environmentalists representing different political and social temperaments. As an alternative to the national anthem they adopted a translation of the American folk-singer Pete Seeger's *My Rainbow Race* (1973), which became the highest-selling single in Norway that year. It became the unifying song of the counterculture generation. Indeed, as late as 2012, forty thousand people gathered for a sing-along of the song in Oslo against terrorism.

According to the Deep Ecologists, the task of pointing out the new environmental direction would require interdisciplinary approaches and research institutions. Unlike the European Community, which based its policies only on the advice of economists, they thought no sole academic discipline should determine the future. A viable path forward would need the analysis of a cluster of disciplines working in close collaboration to address the complexity of ecological crisis and the way out of it. Thus, interdisciplinary environmental research was intrinsically linked with an alternative vision for Norway outside the European Community. In the Cold War divide, it was also important to show that this environmental alternative did not lead to communism.

In the heat of the debate in 1972, the environmental crisis was the cause that united most students against the European Community. Ecological arguments were also the least threatening to leaders of academic communities worried about a leftward drift among the young. At the University of Oslo, for example, the leadership would promote environmental debates as a way of channeling student radicalism toward a productive end. At the end of February 1972 the Academic Collegium approved a symposium under the heading "Humans-Nature-Environment," which became a significant event, at least in terms of attendance. For three days in a row, between four and five hundred students and staff members packed the largest auditorium on campus to listen to lectures given by established and young scholars alike.

The seminar was opened by the University President Johannes Andenæs who in his speech argued that the time was ripe to address environmental issues head-on, within both society and academia. "Research must be put to use" for the environmental cause, he claimed.<sup>21</sup> Ecological ideas were at the heart of the rest of the seminar. The professor

<sup>21</sup> Johs. Andenæs quoted in Anonymus, "Naturvern og forskning," *Nytt fra Universitetet i Oslo*, no. 5, 1972, 1–2, UO.

of botany Eilif Dahl gave the keynote lecture on the need to nurture a “global perspective” on ecological issues, followed by a lecture from the biologist Magnar Norderhaug on “Ecology and social development,” and the philosopher Hjalmar Hegge on “Historical perspective on human relationships to nature.” The next two days followed suit with a similar set of lectures from different disciplines, including papers and presentations by Kvaløy and the professor of law Carl A. Fleicher.<sup>22</sup> The latter created a stir within his own faculty when he blamed the “gray masses of lawyers” and not the law of the nation for a lack of nature protection.<sup>23</sup> With the exception of Andenæs, all these scholars became key agents in Norwegian environmental debate.

The University’s Office of Public Affairs used the seminar for all its worth to showcase the University as progressive, but not leftist. It was reported on the front page of two issues of its news bulletin, and the event was, as a consequence, also widely reported in the national press. The symposium was front page news in Norway’s leading engineering bulletin, for example, which reminded its readers about the importance of working in balance with nature.<sup>24</sup> The interdisciplinary nature of the seminar gave the University a public face striving for the common good. Kvaløy, who was known for organizing the illegal Mardøla demonstration and subsequent student activities, was, for example, embraced by university administrators. He was not only given speaking time at the seminar, but also an interview presenting him sympathetically in the official news bulletin.<sup>25</sup>

Students were invited to put up a poster exhibition outside the auditorium about ongoing environmental research. The student newspaper followed suit with reports from the seminar and an interview with Kvaløy. Here he called for a massive “scientist boycott” of research supporting the industrial society, and encouraged scientists to get out of their “disciplinary boxes” and engage in interdisciplinary “activist research” to solve environmental problems.<sup>26</sup> The Deep Ecologists at the University were also given due coverage with a lengthy presentation

<sup>22</sup> Anonymous, “Menneske – natur – miljø,” *Nytt fra Universitetet i Oslo*, no. 3, 1972, 1–3, UO.

<sup>23</sup> Anonymous, “Grå masse av jurister, ikke norsk lov hindrer naturvern,” *Aftenposten* Mar. 1, 1972, UO.

<sup>24</sup> Anonymous, “Menneske – natur – miljø,” *Ingeniør-nytt*, Mar. 10, 1972, 1, UO.

<sup>25</sup> Anonymous, “Natur- og miljøvern – hva nå?” *Nytt fra Universitetet i Oslo*, no. 5, 1972, 2–3, UO.

<sup>26</sup> Sigmund Kvaløy, “Forskerne ut av sine faghåser!” *Universitas*, Mar. 14, 1972, UO.



by one of its members.<sup>27</sup> They inspired the newspaper to suggest a “new moral” code for student consumerism:

Thou shall not build your house on good cultivated soil  
 Thou shall not kill vermin with poison  
 Thou shall not use paper handkerchiefs  
 Thou shall not use paper panties  
 Thou shall not buy canned beer  
 Thou shall not eat French-fries  
 Thou shall not have more than two children<sup>28</sup>

This code, written in the spirit of the Mosaic Law, reflects deep-seated Protestant ethics within Norwegian culture. There is no hint of the author poking fun when it comes to the suggestion of a new ethics for consumption of paper handkerchiefs and popular throwaway panties for females. The code should instead be understood as a sincere suggestion for concrete actions that students could engage in immediately.

The Deep Ecologists fashioned themselves as alternative to the conservative, technocratic, and capitalist European Community, but without leftist answers to the ecological crisis. As a result the university leadership began a process that led to the establishment of *Rådet for natur og miljøfag* (The Council for Nature and Environmental Studies). The process began in the fall of 1971 when the Faculty of Mathematical and Natural Sciences established, in response to student demand, an Environmental Committee to coordinate new research and provide an overview of existing research and teaching on the topic. The Committee was chaired by the chemistry professor Lars Skattebøl who, in November 1971, argued that the faculty should offer a cross-disciplinary master’s degree on the topic based on a set of courses in the natural sciences.<sup>29</sup> Skattebøl was not known for being inflamed by environmental concern and his proposal failed to include the social and humanistic sciences. This was particularly upsetting to the ecophilosophers who had initiated most of the environmental debates on campus. Therefore, by January 1972, scholars and students from these parts of the University were starting to pitch in with alternative suggestions for a degree encompassing the humanistic and social fields as well.<sup>30</sup>

<sup>27</sup> Bjørn Hersoug, “Politikk og økologi: En ikke-autoritativ presentasjon av SNM,” *Universitas*, Apr. 7, 1972, UO.

<sup>28</sup> Anonymous, “Ny moral,” *Universitas*, Apr. 7, 1972, UO.

<sup>29</sup> Anonymous, “Miljøvern ved Det matematisk-naturvitenskaplige fakultet,” *Nytt fra Universitetet i Oslo*, no. 17, Nov. 24, 1971, 7, UO.

<sup>30</sup> Anonymous, “Miljøvern ved Universitetet,” *Universitas*, Jan. 18, 1972, UO.

The student activities did not go unnoticed by the university head-mastership as they represented an opportunity for the President, Andenæs, to display leadership. Interdisciplinary was another word for inter-faculty activity, which brought the decision-making to the highest level of the University, namely him. The “Humans-Nature-Environment” seminar was one such opportunity for him to show leadership (the opening of the new High Mountain Ecology Research Station at Finse in June the same year was another – as discussed in Chapter 2). Environmental research was daring, radical, and progressive, but not leftist. The university leadership could thus benefit from supporting it as a middle course of the Cold War political divide. The Student Parliament voted against Norwegian European Community membership in April 1972, and their chief reason was the lack of environmental protection within what they saw as a capitalist enterprise geared at callous exploitation of nature.<sup>31</sup> Supporting environmental studies on campus was thus also a way of lending support to the vocal anti-European Community movement on campus. Though the Chancellor showed little academic awareness of environmental questions and problems, many members of the Academic Collegium were genuinely interested.

This, at least, seems to be clear if one is to judge from the conference that the Collegium sponsored at the end of May 1972 on the topic of how to organize the field of environmental studies. It was a by-invitation-only event at the scenic Sole Turisthotel, which included just about thirty students, scholars, and Collegium members in total. At the end the conference recommended establishing a Council for Nature and Environmental Studies, and, even more significantly, considered establishing a required core course in environmental studies at the new institution for *all* students entering the University.<sup>32</sup>

The students must have made an impact at the conference, as the new Council’s steering committee initially consisted only of students and recent graduates. They were the undergraduates Anne Bjørnebye and Aanund Hylland, the graduate student of sociology Terje Lind, the recent graduate of chemistry Gunnar Brostigen, and, the most senior scholar and graduate of philosophy, Kvaløy.<sup>33</sup> Though tenured professors were soon

<sup>31</sup> Ove Molland, “EEC og miljøvern,” *Universitas*, Apr. 7, 1972, 3, UO.

<sup>32</sup> Anonymous, “Undervisning og forskning i natur- og miljøfag ved Universitetet,” *Nytt fra Universitetet i Oslo*, no. 10, June 20, 1972, 7–8, UO.

<sup>33</sup> Anonymous, “Rådet for natur- og miljøfag,” *Nytt fra Universitetet i Oslo*, no. 11, Sept. 5, 1972, 6, UO.

to enter the Council's steering committee, the initial appointments are surely evidence of the Collegium wanting to involve the young in the decision-making process. It also illustrates the respect Kvaløy enjoyed as an intellectual and social mover of ecological debates at the University and beyond. As will be argued (in Chapter 5), the Council came to establish Environmental Studies as a new field in Norway.

These events should be understood in context of increasingly vocal debates on the upcoming national referendum. It became perhaps the most intense public debate in Norway to date, culminating in a vote against membership in the EC with a 53.5 percent margin. For the Deep Ecologists it felt like everything had turned out for the best. They were excited. The fact that they had won gave them clout and boosted their self-confidence. Instead of joining the capitalist forces, the nation could now devote itself to inspiring Europe and the world by turning itself into a successful test case for alternative ecopolitics and lifestyles. Norway was to lead the way for Europe and the world, they argued, and its ecologically inspired scholars were to be the very vanguard of this alternative nation. Having won, the ecophilosophers began looking for a middle ground in the Cold War divide as an alternative to both capitalist and communist answers to the environmental crisis.

#### DEEP ECOLOGY IN BUCHAREST

It was in the context of the upcoming referendum on the European Community membership that, at the 3rd World Future Research Conference in Bucharest in early September 1972, Næss introduced a "summary" of the debate with the paper "The Shallow and the Deep Ecology Movement." The conference was organized by the World Futures Studies Federation, initiated by Galtung and his Peace Research Institute in Oslo, which hosted its inaugural conference in 1967. What dominated Future Studies in 1972 was *The Limits to Growth* report for the Club of Rome written by, among others, the twenty-seven-year-old Norwegian solid-state physicist Jørgen Randers (b. 1945).<sup>34</sup> Randers was at the time entirely unknown. It was therefore a shock to Næss and Galtung to see this nobody rise to world fame in the field and especially at a conference they sought to control. Chapter 7 will discuss Randers' contribution at

<sup>34</sup> Donella H. Meadows, Dennis L. Meadows, Jørgen Randers, William W. Behrens III, *The Limits to Growth: A Report for the Club of Rome's Project on the Predicament of Mankind* (New York: Signet, 1972).

length. At this stage it should only be noted that the MIT group behind the report was part of a larger trend of environmentalists looking for solutions to ecological problems within established social structures. John McHale, a dominating figure in Future Studies circles, may serve as an example. He argued that the world did not need a social, spiritual, or lifestyle revolution, but instead a technologically driven design revolution.<sup>35</sup> The Romanian scholars made up the majority of the people there, both as presenters and in the audience, and they were vocal supporters of technocratic solutions to social and environmental ills. Licinius Ciplea, for example, gave a paper entitled “The Technological Parameters of Long Range Ecological Politics,” in which he argued that better technologies and social management could mobilize enough natural resources for the whole world.<sup>36</sup> At the opening of the Bucharest conference, the technocrats thus had a leading role in setting up questions and formulating answers to the ecological crisis.

For Galtung and Næss, the time was ripe in Bucharest to hit back at what they saw as a “shallow” technocratic analysis of the environmental situation. Galtung spoke first with his paper “*The Limits to Growth and Class Politics*,” a head-on attack on the lack of social analysis in the report. It represented an “ideology of the middle class,” he argued, that was “politically blind” to the interest of the poor. Indeed, the Club of Rome informed recommendations “was staged by ‘The International Union of the World’s Middle Class,’” and one should therefore “fight these cheap and dangerous solutions” in interest of the workers of the world.<sup>37</sup> Galtung had Marxist sympathies. On the wall behind the stage on which he was speaking was a mural “to the glory of socialist labor,” and the lecture was simultaneously translated into key Eastern Bloc languages.<sup>38</sup>

<sup>35</sup> John McHale, “Future research: Some integrative and communicative aspects,” in Robert Jungk and Johan Galtung (eds.), *Mankind 2000* (Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, 1970), pp. 256–63; *The Future of the Future* (New York: George Braziller, 1969).

<sup>36</sup> Licinius Ciplea, “The technological parameters of long range ecological politics” (abstract), in Helen Seidler and Cristina Krikorian (eds.), *3rd World Future Research Conference: Abstracts* (Bucharest: Centre of Information and Documentation in Social and Political Sciences, 1972), pp. 21–2. Pavel Apostol, “English summary,” in *Calitatea vieții și explorarea viitorului* (Bucharest: Editura politică, 1975), pp. 258–69.

<sup>37</sup> Johan Galtung, *Økologi og klassepolitikk*, Therese Henriksen (trs.) (Copenhagen: Christian Ejlers’ Forlag, 1972), 12, 14, 22. Shorter versions published as “Økologi og klassekamp,” *Samtiden*, 82 (1973), 65–83; “*The limits to growth and class politics*,” *Journal of Peace Research*, 10, no. 1/2 (1973), 101–14.

<sup>38</sup> Jim Dator, “The WFSF and I,” *Futures*, 37 (2005), 371–85, quote p. 373. G. F., “Third World Future Research Conference,” *Futures*, 4 (1972), 381–2. Irving H. Buchen, “Futuristic Conference in Romania,” *The Futurist*, 7 (Feb. 1973), 31–2. Bart van

His class perspective must thus have been welcome to the chief patron of the Bucharest conference, the Romanian President Nicolae Ceaușescu, who saw class-based Future Studies as an integral part of the “Science of Social Management” on which he based his Marxist regime.<sup>39</sup>

When it was Næss’s turn to mount the rostrum in Bucharest, he too took an “anti-class posture,” but would otherwise stay away from socialist lingo in presenting “The Shallow and the Deep Ecology Movement.” It was immediately understood as an onslaught on the “shallow” technocratic perspective of Randers and the Club of Rome. This “restricted movement which has many friends among the power elite,” Næss argued, was in danger of consolidating the debate at the expense of “the deeper movement [which] finds itself in danger of being deceived through smart maneuvers.”<sup>40</sup> The fact that there were thus two ecological movements was controversial to Ceaușescu’s followers, who could visualize only one movement toward one future. Much of the debate at the conference would center on this point. Næss would, as a consequence, change the title of his paper in the published version from “movement” to “movements” to emphasize the pluralism of possible ecological perspectives, and he borrowed the words “Long Range” from Ciplea to indicate that the future could entail solutions to ecological problems other than Ceaușescu’s socialist technocracy.

Strangely, no evidence suggests that the most original aspect of the paper, the eco-centrism, raised any interest in Bucharest. The need to develop a “*relational*” (as opposed to humans being above) nature philosophy, along with “[*b*]iospherical egalitarianism,” social and environmental “*diversity*,” “[*a*]nti-class posture,” campaigns “*against pollution and resource depletion*,” promotion of “[*c*]omplexity,” and “[*l*]ocal autonomy and decentralization” were at the heart of the paper.<sup>41</sup> It reflected the relationship to the environment he had himself seen in

Steenbergen, “The first fifteen years: A personal view of the early history of the WFSF,” *Futures*, 37 (2005), 355–60.

<sup>39</sup> Nicolae Ceaușescu, “Opening remarks,” in “Management Science and Futures Studies in Socialist Romania,” *Viitorul Social* (Bucharest: Meridiane Pub. House, 1972), pp. 7–18.

<sup>40</sup> The original lecture has only survived in Romanian as Arne Næss, “Miscarea ecologică superficială și profundă,” in Mihai Botez and Mircea Ioanid (eds.), *Viitorul comun al oamenilor: comunicări prezentate la cea de-a III-a Conferință mondială de cercetare a viitorului, București, septembrie 1972* (Bucharest: Editura politică, 1976), pp. 275–83. Later published as “The shallow and the deep ecology movement,” Erling Schøller (trs.), *The Trumpeter*, 24, no. 1 (2008), 59–66.

<sup>41</sup> Arne Næss, “The shallow and the deep, long-range ecology movements: A summary,” *Inquiry*, 16 (1973), 95–100, quotes pp. 95–8. Næss’s emphasis.

Sherpa culture in the village of Beding, Nepal. Though Næss surely believed in this himself, it is important to note that the aim of his article was to capture the spirit of debates he observed among the Deep Ecologists that surrounded him in Oslo, including the thinking of Kvaløy, their spiritual leader. This perspective emerged from a culture of outdoor lifestyle among Norwegian ecologists, or as Næss put it: “Ecological insight and the lifestyle of the ecological field-worker have *suggested, inspired, and fortified* the perspectives of the deep ecology movement.”<sup>42</sup>

Back in Oslo Næss discovered that he had lost his paper, and others would later speculate that it “was confiscated by the Ceaușescu-regime” and that it was probably “preserved somewhere in the archives in Bucharest.”<sup>43</sup> As it turns out, neither is the case. Næss must have forgotten that the organizers in Bucharest collected most of the papers from the conference so that they could translate them into Romanian, and the original manuscript is no longer in the Romanian National Archive.<sup>44</sup> Upon returning to Oslo without his manuscript, Næss used his notes to compile an abbreviated version which he published in his own journal *Inquiry* as “The Shallow and the Deep, Long-Range Ecology Movements: A Summary” in 1973.<sup>45</sup> Judging from subsequent citations, it became one of the most famous articles in environmental ethics. In Norway it was received as a concise summary of the opinions held among Deep Ecologists, though they preferred “ecophilosophy,” “ecopolitics,” or (less often) “coreligion” to the term “deep ecology.”

#### MARXIST ATTACK

Ironically, the long-range ecology movement Næss spoke of would fade upon his return to Oslo, as Deep Ecology study groups were taken over by Marxist Leninists. At the University of Oslo Deep Ecology died away as a movement in 1973 after a period of internal cleansings and futile debates about the value of democracy.<sup>46</sup>

<sup>42</sup> Næss, “The shallow and the deep,” (2008), 65.

<sup>43</sup> Editorial comment, Nina Witoszek and Andrew Brennan (eds.), *Philosophical Dialogues* (New York: Rowman and Littlefield, 1999), 7, note 1.

<sup>44</sup> Marcel Dumitru Ciucă at the Rumanian National Archive to Peder Anker, Nov. 9, 2006, PA.

<sup>45</sup> Næss, “The shallow and the deep,” 1973.

<sup>46</sup> Grimeland, *En historie om klatring*, 2004, 122. Jardar Seim, “Miljøvern utan politiske følger?” *Syn og segn* 78 (1972), 515–24. Samarbeidsgruppa for natur og miljøvern, *Håndbok i miljøvern: Økopolitisk strategi og taktikk* (Oslo: Cappelen, 1973).

The Deep Ecologists had, up until the election of 1972, collaborated with the Center Party along with various groups on the left and far left side of the Cold War divide. This was a common effort to hinder membership in the European Community. The unity would soon go wrong. After the referendum a vocal group of radical Marxists began telling the ecophilosophers that it was not the European Community's exploitation of nature that was the problem, but instead the capitalist exploitation of the workers of the world.<sup>47</sup> One telling proponent of this line of argument was the German intellectual Hans Magnus Enzensberger, who wrote in 1973 about "the new petit bourgeois" "ecological movement" in Norway and beyond, comments that were taken to heart by Norwegians on the far left.<sup>48</sup>

Among his readers was the Marxist-Leninist student organization Red Frontier, who, according to the student newspaper, "took the piss out" of the short-lived campus environmental organization Green Grass. After a "Green spring there will be a Red Fall" the leftists predicted, hinting at the upcoming national referendum in September 1972.<sup>49</sup> They saw "the fight against the Eco-catastrophe as the bourgeoisie reaction to the capital's dark side," and worried that environmentalism would undermine the true revolutionary spirit of students.<sup>50</sup>

After the referendum in September there was indeed a "Red Fall," as the Marxists-Leninists purged environmental campus organizations as Deep Ecology was seen as reformist and thus not truly revolutionary. The thinking of Kvaløy and his friends was bourgeois, they argued, as he and the Deep Ecology study groups were unable to create a proper mass movement of blue-collar workers. The ecologist Mysterud was the first to notice this leftward turn in the politics of ecology, something he regretted as it undermined the broad science-based environmentalism he sought to mobilize.<sup>51</sup> Thanks to the Marxists, by the end of 1973, the once flourishing Deep Ecology movement faded away along with similar student led environmental campus organizations.

<sup>47</sup> Helge Christie, Erling Amble, and Erik Steineger, "To linjer i miljøvern arbeidet," *Miljømagasinet*, 8 (1974), 10–11, 22.

<sup>48</sup> Hans Magnus Enzensberger, "Zur Kritik der Politischen Ökologie," *Kursbuch*, 33 (Oct. 1973), 1–42, translated into Norwegian as "Den politiske økologi – en kritikk," *Vardøger*, 9 (1977), 15–46, quote p. 21.

<sup>49</sup> Anonymous, "Horribelt møte i DNS" and "Grønt Gras og Rød Front," *Universitas*, Apr. 25, 1972, UO.

<sup>50</sup> Anonymous, "Økologidebatten ML-erne aldri forstod," *Universitas*, Apr. 25, 1972, UO.

<sup>51</sup> Ivar Mysterud, "Økopolitikk, biologi og klassekamp," *Norsk natur*, 7 (1971), 123–7. Ivar Mysterud and Iver Mysterud, "Reviving the ghost of broad ecology," *Journal of Social and Evolutionary Systems*, 17 (1994), 167–95.

The Co-working Group's unofficial leader, Kvaløy, was in Nepal in the fall semester of 1973 while these events took place. He was there to do more research on the ecological virtues of the Beding village. Together with a zoologist, a physician, and an ethno-botanist, they sought to find out whether or not "the Sherpa-society in Rolwaling could be understood as a society with a high degree of ecological balance."<sup>52</sup> To Kvaløy this was very much the case. To him it was a steady-state village living in harmony with nature, from which the industrial society was in urgent need to learn. Indeed, "it [was] a society we should envy – especially now [in 1973] when we are about to enter final stages of the eco-crisis."<sup>53</sup> His fellow travelers shared much of Kvaløy's thinking upon departure for Nepal, but at least one of them returned to Oslo as a skeptic. It was not clear to all that the Sherpa's way of naming, organizing, and handling their plants, for example, was that harmonious or ecological, a point the Marxists appreciated.

And Marxists had bigger fish to fry than campus environmentalists. They were well organized and began their subversive attacks on the Deep Ecology organization in earnest in 1974. By the spring of 1978 they had managed to take over the organization, after which they did very little with it. Judging from the meeting records, the debates were so long that most activists would leave from exhaustion.<sup>54</sup> They did little with the organization as their plan was to halt the spread of ecological revisionism and instead mobilize for a Maoist revolution, as they sincerely believed the Chinese offered an ecologically viable regime.<sup>55</sup> It is worth noting that these Marxist initiatives were not just destructive because they inspired environmentalists to establish Chinese-style farming collectives in Norway. Others gave up fighting the Marxists and chose instead to "drop out" completely, living according to Deep Ecology principles in Sherpa-style steady-state agricultural communities in old mountain or fjord farms.<sup>56</sup>

<sup>52</sup> Erik Steineger, *Etnobotaniske undersøkelser i et sherpasamfunn i Rolwaling-dalen, Nepal*, MA thesis (Oslo: Matematisk-naturvitenskapelig fakultet, 1977), p. 22.

<sup>53</sup> Sigmund Kvaløy, "Rolwaling – et livssamfunn i likevekt," *Mestre fjellet*, 15 (1973), 11–12, quote p. 12.

<sup>54</sup> Pål Ytreberg, "Diktat fra Høyere, Kvaløy m.fl.," (*snm*) *nytt*, 5 (May 1976), 9–11. Kvaløy, "Demokrati."

<sup>55</sup> Helge Christie, "Kina," (*snm*) *nytt*, 9 (Dec. 1976), 22–3. Erling Amble, "Kineserne og økologien," (*snm*) *nytt*, 7 (Sept. 1977), 20–2. Kjell Gunnar Holm and Knut Sørensen, "Økologi og økopolitikk: Noen trekk ved økobevegelsen i Norge," *Vardøger*, 9 (1977), 47–69.

<sup>56</sup> Stein Jarving, *Grønt liv: Økologisk strategi – populistisk virkelighet: Om jordbrukskollektiv i praksis* (Oslo: Gyldendal, 1974), 17. Anders Lindhjem-Godal, "Kjernefamilien er en sosial sjukdom: Kollektivliv på Karlsøy i Troms." In Tor Egil Frøland and Trine Rogg Korsvik (eds.), 1968: *Opprør og motkultur på norsk* (Oslo: Pax, 2006), pp. 93–118.



Nevertheless, these events came to challenge old friendships, including Johan Galtung's friendship with Kvaløy and Næss. Galtung became a sturdy supporter of Maoist China after a visit in the fall of 1973, claiming that environmentalists had a lot to learn from the country. "The Chinese seemed so happy, so satisfied, so kind," he noted after meeting local peasants.<sup>57</sup> It is worth noting that he, in his library at the International Peace Research Institute in Oslo, had evidence at hand to the contrary, including reports by Amnesty International and others.<sup>58</sup> In any case, back in Oslo, he told environmentalists inspired by "ecological theory" that the Chinese did not "try to have a theoretical superstructure that brings the relationship to nature and the relationship to humans onto the same level."<sup>59</sup> Instead he thought Norwegians should learn from the "self-reliance" of decentralized Chinese farming cooperatives.<sup>60</sup> These Chinese community brigades did not depend on a national economic system and dealt with pollution and other environmental issues on a local level, he claimed.

The Marxists used Galtung's argument for all its worth in their ongoing efforts to change the Deep Ecologists. By 1978 the communists had won their battle but lost the war, as Kvaløy, Høyer, Næss, and their many supporters began a new association called *Økopolitisk samarbeidsring* (Ecopolitical Cooperation Ring), which was immune to Marxist attacks. It had no formal structure, and members were recruited, and indeed communicated, only through personal conversations, fax, telephone, or a newsletter (financed by Næss).<sup>61</sup> Within a year it became the intellectual and social backbone of Norwegian environmental debate. Their efforts culminated in the attempt to save the Alta-Kautokeino waterway from hydropower development (Chapter 9). A closer look at their ethical reasoning, academic research, and educational program will be the topic of the next chapter.

<sup>57</sup> Anders Magnus and Tor Selstad (interview with Johan Galtung), "Massenes skaperkraft er uendelig," *Miljømagasinet*, 1 (1974), 24–7, quote p. 27.

<sup>58</sup> Amnesty International, *Annual Report 1973–1974* (London: Amnesty International, 1974), 51.

<sup>59</sup> Galtung quoted in Magnus and Selstad, "Massenes skaperkraft er uendelig," p. 24.

<sup>60</sup> Johan Galtung and Fumiko Nishimura, *Kan vi lære av Kineserne?* (Oslo: Gyldendal, 1975), p. 94.

<sup>61</sup> Anonymous, "Økopolitisk samarbeidsring ('Ringene') i stutte ordlag," *Ringene* 1 (1978), 3–5.